

Story 2021 (1998 Tape 1

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Reverence for the Blessed Bread

There was a wise man who became rich. As time passed, he grew richer and richer. He was surprised by this, and he was uncertain about why this was happening. In fact, he was somewhat worried by his steadily increasing fortune. He thought, "What is going on here? Am I too enthusiastic about acquiring worldly wealth?" He then prayed about this matter, saying, "O my Allah, what is the reason for this situation? Why do You continue to give me so much property and other wealth? Why?"

Allah sent to this man a message, which was delivered by Gabriel (May peace be unto him!).¹ The message was this: "Walk around while you are eating your bread. You may then discover that your situation will begin to change."

"All right," said the wealthy man. He began at once to eat bread only while he was walking about. But nothing seemed to change, and his wealth continued to

¹The Turkish term for this verbal obeisance to an angel or saint is aleyhisselâm.

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grow. He therefore prayed again. "O my Allah, if my ample wealth continues to grow, it may make me greedy. If that should happen, I might cease being helpful to my relatives, to my friends, and to other people in this community. As you directed, I have been eating bread only while I have been walking around, but still my wealth continues to get larger. What is the reason for this?"

Allah then sent him a second message. "You have indeed been eating bread only while you have been walking around, but you protect it by carrying it in a handkerchief. therefore do not drop any bread--not even crumbs--upon the floor, where you might tread upon it. Bread is a blessed food, and reverence for it is a good measure of a person's virtue. You deserve all that you have received

The wealthy man thought about this for awhile. Then he said to himself, "Now I understand my situation. Bread is a divine gift, and anyone who casts it down or is disrespectful toward it may well bring unhappiness to his household."